

No. 2527
Mr. Albert H. Griffith -
With compliments of
F. H. Pezet
Ambassador of Peru

LINCOLN AND PERU

AN ADDRESS

BY

HIS EXCELLENCY
DON FEDERICO PEZET

AMBASSADOR FROM THE REPUBLIC OF PERU

DELIVERED AT

SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

FEBRUARY 12, 1921

THE BIRTHDAY OF LINCOLN

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

OF

HON. RICHARD YATES,
OF ILLINOIS,

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Monday, May 16, 1921.

Mr. YATES. Mr. Speaker, on the 12th day of February, the birthday of Lincoln, a pilgrimage was made to the tomb of Lincoln at Springfield, Illinois, by Hon. Federico Pezet, ambassador to the United States from the Republic of Peru.

At the tomb of Lincoln he delivered an address that was notable. It is the first tribute to the memory of Abraham Lincoln by any South American.

I ask unanimous consent that I may extend my remarks by inserting in the RECORD this address made by Ambassador Pezet.

There was no objection.



WASHINGTON

1921

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ADDRESS

DELIVERED BY

F. A. PEZET,

AMBASSADOR OF PERU,

At Springfield, Ill., on February 12, 1921.

Mr. Chairman, ladies, and gentlemen, I thank you for the honor you have bestowed upon me by your invitation to attend the impressive ceremonies of this day, and this banquet in the company of such distinguished men and women, and for the manner in which my name has been received.

It is perhaps an interesting coincidence that I, who address you on this occasion, am the grandson of the man who was President of Peru during the very period when Abraham Lincoln was President of the United States.

From my grandfather, Gen. Juan Antonio Pezet, I inherit my veneration for Lincoln, for he was one of Lincoln's greatest admirers. He followed with the very keenest interest the history of the great struggle for the preservation of the Union and hailed the victory of the established Government as the triumph of a great principle and a lesson for all time.

When the news reached Peru of the tragedy of April 14, 1865, the sorrow was intense and the sympathy for the American people was most sincere. But perhaps none felt more keenly the calamity that had visited this Nation than President Pezet, who had understood the greatness of the man, Abraham Lincoln, who had seen the magnitude of his work, and realized to what an extent he was necessary to the American people.

To-day it has been my privilege to do honor to the memory of your great President, and in the name of my country I have deposited a wreath bearing the colors of Peru at his mausoleum. This tribute I have paid, imbued with the most intense sentiment of veneration, realizing that I was interpreting not only the sentiment of my Government and people, who were thus afforded an opportunity to show their love and admiration for one of America's greatest citizens and one of the world's most remarkable men, but also in a very real sense carrying out what would have been the earnest desire and hope of my grandfather, the contemporary of Abraham Lincoln.

When I consider that I owe the privilege of having been given this opportunity to you, gentlemen of the Mid Day Luncheon Club, to you, gentlemen of the Lincoln Centennial Association, and to you, sir, the mayor of this capital city of the great State of Illinois, I feel that I am indebted to you for what is probably the greatest honor that has ever been accorded to me in my whole life. For what can compare with the honor of being here to-day, in this the national shrine of your most beloved statesman, invited to pay tribute to his memory, and moreover to be one of the favored few among foreigners who have been thus privileged? And when I reflect that I am the first citizen of a Latin-American sister Republic to be the recipient of this honor, I assure you, gentlemen, that I feel that verily a bond has been established between us; I feel that the undying spirit of the Great Emancipator stands before us as he lived, stretching out his hands to us and drawing my people and your people closer together in intimacy and understanding.

As a Latin American, as a South American, as a Peruvian, I accept the honor, and I shall hope that my few remarks on this historic occasion, the one hundred and twelfth anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln, may be such as to leave with you the conviction that all our peoples, and more specially my people, have for your great hero the same veneration, admiration, and love that is borne by the whole of the American people above and below the Mason and Dixon line.

Probably there is no phase of the character of the preserver of the Union that has been left untouched in the thousands of speeches, addresses, and essays that have been delivered and written in his honor, to the memory of his achievements, or to point a lesson to future generations on the value of those sterling qualities he possessed in such a high degree. However, though the man has been studied, his life and career analyzed, his deeds recorded and commented upon, and his sayings chronicled, there is one phase that has, perhaps, been, in a measure, overlooked. The diplomatic or international aspect of his administration has been perhaps not so much overlooked as overshadowed by the great domestic issues of his day, issues involving not only the interests of this people but the very life of the Nation. Nevertheless, during the years of his administration there evolved out of these domestic issues and out of the acts of previous administrations events of an international character which, at times, assumed very large proportions. They became a source of grave concern to this man who was directing the ship of state through such troubled and agitated waters at home. He had the genius not only to understand and realize the import of those questions at that precise time but to know the necessity of keeping a cool head in the face of them, and of not allowing them to befog his vision or to obscure the one great issue that needed all his attention and care.

The war of secession quite naturally brought about a series of international questions. Chiefly responsible for this was the attitude of certain European powers toward the United States, and in a way an unexpressed desire in some quarters for the breaking up of the American Republic into two separate sovereign States.

On the several incidents that occurred during those eventful years with Great Britain, France, and other European powers, I shall not dwell. They are more or less familiar to every American who knows the history of his country. But what I would like to lay stress upon is the manner in which Lincoln viewed those incidents, and how he did not permit them, grave as they were, to deflect his mind from the great problem with which he was dealing at home. To him the preservation of the Union was the paramount issue; it was the one great aim of his administration, his goal. He fully realized what his opponents, the men of the Confederacy, were trying to obtain to further their own cause and make the positions of the Government at Washington precarious, and he was not unmindful of the fact that even in his own party and in his own intimate circle there were many who did not understand him, who looked on him as something of a mystery, and who believed that he needed to be counseled and, in a measure, controlled lest his unfamiliarity with certain questions and topics should lead him into committing the Government.

It took some time for the men of his entourage to realize the greatness of his mind and the straightness of his reasoning. But as they became acquainted with him they had to acknowledge to themselves that his was the master mind and that he was the President, no matter how much his outward appearance might make him seem a simple son of the people.

It was this mastery over all men who came in contact with him, effected without consciously assuming it, that saved the Union and prevented the international questions which the Civil War gave birth to from growing to undue proportions or becoming so unmanageable that their only solution would be war. In the face of the greatest excitement throughout the North and notwithstanding the untiring efforts of the South to embroil the Government at Washington with the great European powers, Lincoln as I have already said, kept a cool head and never for one moment gave way to any show of anxiety. On the contrary he curbed the vehemence and excitement of his own friends and counselors, many of whom would have led him into a great foreign war believing that in this lay the only means of preventing the spread of the southern rebellion and what seemed to them the inevitable division of the Nation into two distinct sovereign States.

No man has ever been tried in the way Lincoln was tried during the first years of his administration. No man was ever more misunderstood than he. From the very first he was fully cognizant of his great responsibility, bent on doing what he believed to be his duty by his country and fellow men.

To avoid complications abroad so as to save the Union was his one aim, and to it he subordinated all his other actions.

Lincoln's attitude toward Latin America showed the man's vision, his broadness of mind, and true sense of justice. His predecessor, James Buchanan, most unfortunately had antagonized many of the Latin Republics in South and Central America by directing against

them a policy that Congress, fortunately, would not sanction with its authority to be carried to the extremes the Executive would have desired.

Perhaps, in view of the importance to-day of the interrelations of this country with the Latin American Republics, and more especially with the Republics of South America proper, it will not be unbecoming in me to present in this address a brief synopsis of the exaggerated manner in which the administration of President Buchanan treated the several incidents that occurred during his administration in relation to those Republics, and then to present in contrast the manner in which the wise President Lincoln dealt with the complicated problems his rather impulsive predecessor had left for him to solve.

Commencing with his first annual message to Congress in 1857, President Buchanan emphasized the need that Congress give unto the Executive special powers to employ land and naval forces of the United States to carry into effect the guaranty of neutrality and protection which the United States is bound by treaty with New Granada to maintain on the Isthmus of Panama, and which he wanted extended to other possible routes. He likewise asked Congress to grant him authority to use "other means" in the event that the Government of Paraguay should not give proper redress to the demands of the United States and for an attack against an American vessel in the Paraná River. In his second and third annual messages he reiterated all this, each time making his demand more pressing. In one message he says:

"I repeat the recommendations contained in my last annual message that authority be given to the President to establish one or more temporary military posts across the Mexican line. * * * Our claims against Costa Rica and Nicaragua remain unredressed. * * * I deem it to be my duty once more earnestly to recommend to Congress the passage of a law authorizing the President to employ the naval force at his command for the purpose of protecting the lives and property of American citizens passing in transit across Panama, Nicaragua, and Tehuantepec routes against sudden and lawless outbreaks and depredations. * * *

"I would also recommend to Congress that authority be given to the President to employ the naval force to protect American merchant vessels, their crews and cargoes, against violent and lawless seizure and confiscation in the ports of Mexico and the Spanish American States when these countries may be in a disturbed and revolutionary condition."

In his fourth annual message, his last, he refers to the settlement of the outstanding controversy with the Republic of New Granada by the ratification of the convention signed at Washington on September 10, 1857, a controversy which had become so serious at the period of his inauguration as to make him direct the United States minister at Bogota to demand his passports and return to the United States, thus severing diplomatic relations with that South American nation.

With Peru he acted in precisely the same precipitate manner. Since 1858 there had been a controversy with the Government of Peru on account of the seizure at two Peruvian ports of two American vessels, the ship *Lizzie Thompson* and the bark *Georgiana*, while engaged in loading guano. The vessels were captured by a Peruvian gunboat and taken to Callao, and the masters and their vessels were ordered for trial before the collector of customs as judge of contraband and confiscations. Against this seizure the American minister at Lima protested. The Government of Peru in its reply maintained that the said vessels had been surprised in the criminal and scandalous contraband of guano. In May, 1858, the two vessels were condemned by the lower courts. The American minister thereupon made a demand upon the Government for redress to the amount of \$155,714.35. On November 6 both vessels were sold at public auction by order of the collector of customs acting as judge of confiscations.

In Washington the controversy was taken up by the State Department under Mr. Cass and by Mr. Osma, the minister of Peru. But as neither side would give in to the other, the Peruvian minister finally offered, in behalf of his Government, to submit the controversy to arbitration. The State Department consulted with the owners of the vessels, who decided against arbitration, and in consequence Mr. Cass directed the minister at Lima to demand of the Peruvian Government the immediate adjustment of the claim. And to this effect he presented a five-day ultimatum.

The Government of Peru declined the proposition of the American minister to recognize Peru's fault and to pay a gross sum in full settlement of all claims of citizens of the United States, the amount of such

sum to be fixed by a mixed commission, which should also adjudicate the claims of citizens of Peru against the United States. In politely declining this proposition Peru renewed the offer to arbitrate all claims.

On the 9th of October Mr. Clay, the American minister in Peru, demanded his passports, which were sent to him. But he lingered in Lima until the 20th of October, and this delay was disapproved of by the State Department at Washington.

In his first instructions from Washington, referring to the fact that Mr. Clay had solicited the commander of the Pacific Squadron to send a man-of-war to Callao, the Acting Secretary of State, Mr. Trescott, said:

"Should the *Lancaster* have arrived at Callao in answer to your invitation, I must remind you that the President has repeatedly appealed to Congress for general authority to use the naval forces of the United States for the purpose of enforcing by hostile measures the payment of just claims of our citizens against foreign Governments. The authority has always been refused, and consequently neither the officer in command nor yourself would be warranted in employing any vessel of the United States for such purpose. And I will add, further, that in view of this fact the department considers it inexpedient to ask from the Secretary of the Navy such orders for the cooperation of the Pacific Squadron as you desire. Should the claims not be satisfactorily adjusted, the whole subject will be submitted to Congress at the commencement of the next session."

Meanwhile the Peruvian Government had sent to Washington as minister Dr. Zagarra, a most distinguished jurist. But his arguments did not make any impression on President Buchanan, who, through his Secretary of State, directed the negotiations and insisted on the demand for an immediate settlement according to the terms of the ultimatum delivered at Lima.

On November 26 Mr. Cass wrote to Dr. Zagarra as follows:

"This Government having determined to terminate its diplomatic relations with that of Peru, has withdrawn its legation from that country, and it becomes my duty consequently to announce to you that your functions as the representative of Peru are at an end. I have the honor to transmit herewith your passports."

On March 4, 1861, Abraham Lincoln became President, and he appointed Mr. Seward Secretary of State. One of the first acts of his administration was to restore diplomatic relations with Peru by sending Mr. Christopher Robinson as minister to Lima.

In the letter of instructions of the Department of State to the newly appointed minister appears the following:

"This appointment is an overture by this Government, under the present administration, to renew the friendly relations with Peru, which had been suspended, on the motion of this Government, when administered by the late President, James Buchanan.

"The Peruvian Government may naturally ask and be entitled to an explanation of this change of position on the part of the United States.

"It is confessed to be unfortunate when any government has occasion to reverse its policy in any material respect, especially a policy of friendship or of hostility toward foreign nations. Inconstancy is always liable to be misunderstood for inconsistency, and inconsistency is too often the result of caprice.

"Moreover, when we come to explain such a change in any case, however necessary it may have been, we shall still find it necessary to explain in such a manner as shall not cause it to be understood that the reconsideration is due to personal or partisan considerations indulged by the Government.

"Keeping these points in view, you will be at liberty to say in your communications with the representatives and statesmen of the country to which you are accredited that the President of the United States entertains the opinions that the several States founded on the American Continent have common interests arising out of their neighborhood to each other their common attitudes toward States in the Eastern Hemisphere, and the similarity of the commercial, social, and political institutions; that owing to the inexperience of mankind in the conduct of republican representative institutions, and the incompleteness of assimilation in the population of these American States, there is always too much danger of faction at home, while faction at home inevitably tends to invite intrigues and intervention from abroad for the overthrow of the American powers with hopes of reconquest from Europe. For these reasons the President of the United States, without at all reflecting upon the sentiments or actions of his predecessor, determined in assuming the administration of the Government to resist rather than yield to influences which might tend

to introduce anarchy into any one of the American States or to produce alienation and war between them."

In reviewing the causes assigned by his predecessor for withdrawing our representatives from Peru, he came to the conclusion that although serious differences have arisen between the two countries, yet there was no imperative necessity resulting from those differences for a declaration of war against Peru. Not being able to recommend to Congress the adoption of hostilities against Peru, it seemed to result that the differences between the two States might be accommodated by the two powers in case of renewed and pacific relations.

"The questions in difference between the two countries will be a subject of special instructions in a distinct paper. I confine myself in this dispatch to instructions for your conduct in presenting yourself at Lima.

"You will assure the Government of Peru that the United States are sincere and earnest in their friendship and affection for that Republic; that they desire its prosperity and advancement, equally for the welfare of its own people and the best interests of civilization; and that consistently with that regard for our own rights, which every nation must always cherish which is really independent, the United States will always be found to manifest the most cordial sympathies with the Republic of Peru, and with other sister States on the American Continent.

"I am, sir, your obedient servant,

" WILLIAM H. SEWARD."

As a result of this very friendly message to Peru negotiations were immediately resumed and the proposition of Peru to refer the claims of the *Lizzie Thompson* and the *Georgiana* to arbitration by some friendly power was accepted. The King of the Belgians was named as arbiter, umpire, and friendly arbitrator, with the most ample power to decide and determine all the questions both of law and fact in regard to the seizure and confiscation of the vessels.

In due course of time all the papers and briefs of both sides were duly submitted to His Majesty for his decision. But, contrary to the expectations of the American Government, the minister of foreign affairs of Belgium informed the American minister at Brussels that His Majesty, after examining what had been published on the controversy, perceived that the arbitration would be "of a very delicate nature by reason of the special circumstances of the case and that His Majesty was compelled to decline the rôle of arbitrator." Later it became known that the King had come to the conclusion "that the United States has not the strongest side of the case;" that, indeed, "he would have been constrained," had he accepted to arbitrate, "to decide against the United States," and that his desire not to make a decision unfavorable to the American Government had been the motive for declining to accept the trust which had been offered to him in so flattering a manner.

When President Lincoln was informed of this turn of affairs he at once decided to accept the declination of the Belgian monarch as an adverse opinion and to treat the claims as finally disposed of. The Secretary of State imparted this important information to the minister of Peru in the following terms:

"Sir: You are aware that His Majesty the King of the Belgians has declined to act as arbiter between your Government and that of the United States in the controversy relative to the capture of the *Lizzie Thompson* and *Georgiana*. This circumstance, taken in connection with the reasons assigned by His Majesty for his refusal, has been taken with due consideration by this Government, and I am instructed by the President to announce to you, as the result, that there is no intention on our part to refer the subject to the arbitration of any other power or to pursue the subject further."

The Government of Peru was not slow to appreciate the spontaneous action of the United States, and through its representative in Washington expressed its satisfaction at the manner in which the controversy had ended, a manner which did honor to the principles of justice and moderation of the President.

To this Mr. Seward replied that the Government of the United States had been "guided by its sense of justice toward Peru and its sincere desire to strengthen the friendly relations which now so happily subsist between them."

The foregoing historical reference to the only question that has ever disturbed, even for a moment, the otherwise most cordial relations of Peru with the United States is a proof of the inconvenience of too hasty decisions on matters of international interest; and the diplomatic incident which I have just brought to your attention, taken from forgotten diplomatic archives, is but another instance of the manner in which at times the representatives of the powerful are wont to treat

the weak, ignoring their explanations, setting aside their asseverations, and accepting only as valid proof what their own interested side may have to say on the subject.

Abraham Lincoln the just, who on all domestic questions ever sought to get at the truth before he would commit himself to any decision, practiced the same principle in dealing with other people. This is why his name is to-day respected and his deeds are remembered and he grows with the years in the hearts of all people, because his life is as a mirror wherein are reflected all the good and noble acts he did during his short but useful passage on earth.

I have often been asked why I love the United States, and I could answer truthfully by saying, "Because it has produced men of the type of Washington and Lincoln; because it has given to the world many examples of disinterestedness and many proofs of its altruism in international affairs."

To-day I came here at your invitation to do honor to Lincoln, and in order to do this I have made reference to one among his many acts of justice toward and of consideration for other peoples. I have shown still another trait in his beautiful character, one that endears him to the outside world apart from the wonderful personality which he developed in his conduct of affairs in his own country and among his own people during the trying days he was called upon to command the ship of state.

Lincoln the just in matters of domestic policy has taught his Nation, and through it the world, many valuable lessons. But Lincoln the just, the director of American foreign policy, has taught the world a lesson which as time passes men may come to see in its true light as transcending all his other great services to mankind.

Lincoln offers us the sure, straight road to international peace, the only sure road to that end, which all men, whether idealists or realists, so dearly desire.

How many wars in the world's history have arisen from causes no more fundamental than the differences existing between my country and yours at the time that Abraham Lincoln took the helm of affairs? How many wars have sprung from the intransigence of little men called by an ironic fate to be the rulers of great people?

Lincoln fought and triumphed in one great and unavoidable war. But he kept out of half a dozen other wars, futile wars which might have been but for the temperance of thought, his tolerance, and his innate sense of justice.

Let all the nations develop Lincolns, let all statesmen take him for their model, and the causes of many wars will vanish like morning mists in the sunlight. In this sense Lincoln belongs not only to you, the great and noble American people who gave him birth, but to all just men everywhere.

In terminating may I state that the life of Lincoln reminds us that the greatness of man and the usefulness of his labors and the results of his work are not appreciated by contemporaries, but that it needs time, distance, to present the perspective of every life lived on this earth, and that consequently we should be more forbearing toward public men and not too critical of their actions and motives nor too severe in our judgment of them.

It has been my privilege to be in this country in official life at various periods during the administrations of your last four Presidents, McKinley, Roosevelt, Taft, and Wilson. And I can assure you that I hold them all in great esteem and respect. I have been personally indebted to each and all for many proofs of kind courtesy and of marked interest in the affairs of my country. Having come here as secretary of legation during McKinley's second administration, I remained as such during part of Roosevelt's, was returned as minister during the Taft administration, stayed during Wilson's first term, and in his second I was promoted to be ambassador.

My whole work has been for the closest ties between our respective countries, and the success I may have achieved has been due to the support I have received from the Presidents and the several Secretaries of State, together with the good will of the whole American people toward Peru.

Acknowledging what I owe to this great country, its Government, and people, I would beg you to do honor with me to the great Lincoln, the foremost statesman of America, by rising with me and in a sense of true Lincoln Americanism pay a tribute of respect on this day of days, in this city hallowed by being the depository of Lincoln's remains, to the man who to-day holds the honored and extolled position that Lincoln once held, gentlemen—the President of the United States!

F. A. PEZET.